

(Enclosure 4)

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NSC BRIEFING

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING STRENGTHENS KHRUSHCHEV'S HAND

1. Recently concluded Central Committee meeting, held from 4 to 12 July, ^{may} mark further ~~and significant~~ consolidation of Khrushchev's position.

A. Both new full members of the all-powerful party Presidium have been associated with Khrushchev for many years.

1. A. I. Kirichenko, Ukrainian party boss, worked under Khrushchev in Ukraine from 1938 to 1949.

a. Kirichenko attained position of power at center as candidate member of the Presidium last year during the rapid Khrushchev rise which resulted in Malenkov demotion.

2. M. A. Suslov, party secretary, has worked with Khrushchev in secretariat since 1949.

B. Appointment of at least two of three new Party secretaries also reflects Khrushchev's hand.

1. D. T. Shepilov, Pravda editor, has accompanied Khrushchev on visits to Peking and Belgrade, apparently acting as ideological expert.

2. N. I. Belyayev, first secretary of Altai Krai, is an expert in agriculture, Khrushchev's present hobbyhorse.

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a. Belyayev championed an aggressive agricultural program before one was presented to Central Committee by Khrushchev in February 1954.

3. A. B. Aristov, other appointee, now first secretary in Khabarovsk Krai, has had career like fever chart of malaria patient.

a. He shot to the top at 19th Party Congress in 1952 as member both of expanded Presidium and secretariat.

b. Dropped to bottom after Stalin's death when Presidium and secretariat cut back.

c. Varied associations and strange career make it difficult to assess significance of his appointment.

II. Central Committee also heard a report on convening the 20th Party Congress. ^{but no date was announced.}

A. This appears to be another move in Khrushchev's favor.

1. Congress not required by Party Rules until October 1956.

2. Probable early calling of Congress gives Khrushchev opportunity to consolidate further by striking while iron is hot and he is in ascendancy.

3. If he is able at Congress to secure election of Central Committee subservient to him, will have achieved an almost impregnable position as most powerful member of Presidium.

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III. Timing of Central Committee meeting and clear implication of its decisions supports contention that Premier Bulganin going to Geneva as chief of state in name only.

A. Underscores fact that power in Soviet Union still firmly controlled by the party, led by its First Secretary, N. S. Khrushchev.

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